

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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SECURITY INFORMATION

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1. The arrest and subsequent release of Gilberto VIEIRA White, Secretary General of the Communist Party of Colombia (PCC), has produced different reactions on Party members. Some believe that the release of VIEIRA was a triumph for the Party, while others have expressed the opinion that it was a trick on the part of the government, to create the impression that political persecution does not exist in the country. It is also stated that the government, inspired by the U. S. Embassy, wished to give the Party a false sense of security by convincing it that it is not being persecuted and can exist peacefully, and then, at a later date, take more drastic action against the Party. This last idea is particularly strong among Party members in view of the fact that during the meeting of the Presidents of Colombia and Venezuela at the Colombian border city of Cucuta, on 21 March 1953, one of the announced purposes of the meeting was the solution of the Communist problems of both countries.
2. Dissension within the Party is also arising over the attitude of the Communists toward the guerrillas. The leaders of the Party are being criticized for not sending political directors to the guerrilla chiefs. The leaders are also being criticized for neglecting the farmers, for not presenting them with concrete proposals for land distribution, and for not continuing the anti-Yankee propaganda among them. Complaints are also being heard about the Party's failure to support the attack by the guerrillas on the Palanquero air base, on 1 January 1953, and its lack of initiative in not organizing committees to combat the propaganda which resulted from the meetings of the two Presidents in Cucuta. The Party leaders are also being attacked by some members for their weakness in not adopting more aggressive actions, such as those recommended by Pedro Jose ABELL. The directorate has claimed that all these accusations are baseless, and states that the Party leaders must remain

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in the large cities to maintain the honor of the Communist Party, and to demonstrate that the Party does not fear the action of the government.

3. Communist leaders are pleased with the imprisonment and release of VIEIRA. They feel that the trial exhibited him as a martyr, and that if the government cannot establish satisfactory evidence against the PCC Secretary General, it will be able to do even less against subordinate members of the Party. In general, these informants, including Jaime BARRIOS Rodriguez, Juan Francisco MUJICA, Julio C. PCSADA, and Diego MONTANA Cuellar, have expressed their satisfaction over recent events and their belief that the authorities have rendered the PCC a service. This group considers it possible that the methods pursued by the government might bring Augusto DURAN back into the PCC. Communist leaders are also pleased by the report that 2nd Lieutenant Alvaro TAFUR Mercado had ordered three soldiers to shoot VIEIRA one night while he was at Usaquen, but that the latter had refused to do so, and had carried the matter to their superiors.

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